

# TempePRE

## BLOG

### Why should cities support early childhood education?

Well, for the City of Tempe, this is an easy question to answer. The city has been supporting early childhood programming for many years through its recreation programs and through its Kid Zone and Escalante preschool programs. In 2015, the members of the Tempe City Council were dismayed to learn that many families in our community were not able to access quality preschool opportunities and, as a result, their children were often entering kindergarten without foundational skills so needed to be successful. In response to this information, the city embarked on a nine-month feasibility study to assess the need for quality preschool in Tempe and options for implementation. What we learned from this study was that quality preschool options were limited within our city and that only one-third of our 3 and 4-year-old children were accessing those quality options. That meant that two-thirds of families in our community were lacking access to preschool opportunities. With this information in hand, city leaders agreed to fund a two-year pilot program called Tempe PRE. The program started in August 2017, initially opening 15 classrooms with a goal of increasing to 20 classrooms by January 2018. This goal was achieved and Tempe PRE served 360 children each year in this two-year pilot program. The Tempe community responded positively to the opening of Tempe PRE with waitlists of families eager to have their children participate. The City Council was pleased with the success of the two-year pilot and agreed to fund an additional two years, opening up the program to additional families through tuition options.

The City of Tempe has adopted an Education Roadmap that looks at opportunities for youth from preschool through higher education and workforce and beyond. Supporting our youngest learners through offering high-quality early childhood experiences helps our entire community maintain its health and vibrancy and supports the success of youth and young people in becoming contributing members of our community. We are thrilled that you have selected Tempe PRE as your preschool, and we are honored to support your family in these early years and beyond.

**Education Roadmap:** Tempe's Education Roadmap identifies the community supports needed to attain a goal of 65 percent of Tempe's adult population accessing post-secondary education, resulting in a certification to an advanced degree by 2030. Learn more: [tempe.gov/Education](http://tempe.gov/Education).

*Marie Raymond, MAT is a Human Services Manager, overseeing the Family & Community Support section for the City of Tempe. She works to align systems to improve youth, family, and older adult outcomes and advises Mayor and Council on education policy issues. She serves as the liaison between the City Government and Tempe's three public school districts, Arizona State University, and the Maricopa Community College District and works to align programs and services across city departments to meet the educational needs of Tempe students. Marie is an educator with experience in early childhood, special education, and elementary settings and has an extensive arts background, working to bring arts opportunities to individuals in public housing communities. Marie holds a Master's Degree in Education from Rhode Island College and a Bachelor's Degree from Providence College. She is currently Vice Chair of the Central Arizona Independent Oversight Committee for the Seriously Mentally Ill and is past Chair of the First Things First East Maricopa Regional Partnership Council.*



**We are here to help you navigate the Tempe PRE program.**

Please contact us for assistance 480-858-7735

[Pre-k@tempe.gov](mailto:Pre-k@tempe.gov)

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Tempe PRE is a program of the City of Tempe, in partnership with the Tempe Elementary School District.